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RNR 023

MIDEAST--PERES

JERUSALEM, JUNE 30, REUTER--THE NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISERS AND TECHNICIANS IN SYRIA HAS RISEN SHARPLY, ISRAELI DEFENSE MINISTER YITZHAK PERES TOLD THE KNESSET (PARLIAMENT) HERE TODAY.

BUT THERE IS NO PROOF THEY ARE ACTUALLY MANNING SYRIA'S NEW SOPHISTICATED SOVIET-SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT IN THE FIELD, HE TOLD QUESTIONERS.

HIS REPLIES FOLLOWED STATEMENTS MADE BY HIMSELF AND PREMIER YITZHAK RABIN RECENTLY, AND REPEATED BY CHIEF-OF-STAFF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL MORDECHAI GUR YESTERDAY, THAT THE ARABS, ESPECIALLY THE SYRIANS, MIGHT RENEW FIGHTING BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

MR. PERES SAID THE SOVIET UNION WAS SUPPLYING THE PALESTINE GUERRILLA ORGANIZATIONS WITH ARMS AND EQUIPMENT FROM SHIPS UNLOADING AT ALGERIAN, SYRIAN AND IRAQI PORTS.

RUSSIAN-MADE WEAPONS WERE ALSO BEING SUPPLIED TO THE ORGANIZATIONS BY OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, PRESUMABLY WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF MOSCOW, HE SAID.

OTHER WEAPONS WERE BEING PROVIDED, AGAIN PROBABLY WITH SOVIET KNOWLEDGE, BY ARAB COUNTRIES INCLUDING SYRIA, LIBYA AND IRAQ, MR. PERES ADDED.

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MIDEAST-PERES 2 JERUSALEM

MILITARY SOURCES SAID TODAY THE ARMY WAS TAKING STEPS TO PREPARE FOR RENEWED WAR BY THE END OF THE YEAR. IN ADDITION TO THE LONGER WORK DAY ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY, MEASURES INCLUDE A REVISION OF THE RESERVE CALL-UP SYSTEM AND LONGER RESERVE SERVICE FOR SPECIALISTS.

THIS IS UNDERSTOOD TO BE CONNECTED WITH AN INCREASED RATE OF BUILDING FORTIFICATIONS IN FRONT LINE AREAS.

INDICATIONS OF THE DANGER OF RENEWED FIGHTING, ACCORDING TO RECENT STATEMENTS BY ISRAELI LEADERS, HAVE BEEN GIVEN BY INTELLIGENCE REPORTS OF A MASSIVE ARMS BUILDUP IN SYRIA AND THE SLOWNESS OF THE REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF AREAS HANDED BACK TO EGYPT AND SYRIA UNDER THE DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS.

THEY SAID THAT NO RECONSTRUCTION HAD STARTED IN THE FORMER SYRIAN GARRISON TOWN OF KUNEITRA, ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, AND WORK ON THE RE-OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL AND THE REBUILDING AND REPOPULATION OF CANAL TOWNS SUCH AS ISMAILIA AND SUEZ HAD BEEN PROGRESSING SLOWER THAN PROMISED.

ARESENDELTTATION DNDTGTTHORWAB
OF THE PEACEFUL INTENTION OF THE ARABS, THE ISRAELI LEADERS SAID.

REUTER 0939